

1 1. A method comprising:
2 identifying a first license associated with a first protectable content;
3 providing a plurality of known license attributes;
4 associating at least some of the known license attributes with the first license;
5 assigning a restriction value to each of the associated license attributes, the restriction
6 values of the associated license attributes specifying particular restrictions pertaining to the first
7 protectable content;
8 assigning at least one use value and at least one interaction value to at least some of the
9 associated license attributes, the at least one use value representing a permissible degree of
10 distribution of the first protectable content and the at least one interaction value representing a
11 permissible degree of manipulation of the first protectable content;
12 comparing the assigned restriction, use, and interaction values of the at least some of the
13 associated license attributes with corresponding attribute values associated with a second license,
14 the second license being associated with a second protectable content; and
15 based on the comparison, determining attributes associated with a third protectable
16 content, the third protectable content being at least partly based on a combination of at least
17 some aspects of the first and second protectable content.

1 2. The method of claim 1, wherein the first protectable content and the second protectable
2 content correspond to different software elements.

1 3. The method of claim 2, wherein the software elements are compliant with an open source
2 definition.

1 4. The method of claim 2, wherein the first protectable content is compliant with an open
2 source definition and the second protectable content is not compliant with the open source
3 definition.

1 5. The method of claim 1, wherein the first protectable content corresponds to at least one of
2 a multimedia presentation, a video segment, an audio segment, a textual representation, a work
3 of art, a visual representation, a technological know-how, a business know-how, and a contract
4 right.

1 6. The method of claim 1, wherein the license attributes associated with the first license
2 correspond to at least one of a software code format, a software naming convention, a software
3 code annotation, a warranty, a reverse-engineering activity, a patent litigation activity, a
4 standards body, a violation of intellectual property rights, and a textual description of at least one
5 aspect of the first license.

1 7. The method of claim 1, wherein the assigned restriction values correspond to at least one
2 of a prohibition, a requirement, and a nullity.

1 8. The method of claim 1, wherein the assigned restriction values are set to at least one of
2 true, false, required, don't care, forbidden, 1, 0, -1, and text.

1 9. The method of claim 1, wherein the assigned use values correspond to at least one of an
2 acquisition, a personal use, a research use, an organizational use, a limited distribution, and an
3 unlimited distribution of at least one aspect of the first protectable content.

1 10. The method of claim 1, wherein the assigned interaction values correspond to at least one
2 of an original element, a modified element, a group of distinct elements, a group of
3 interconnected elements, a group of elements capable of providing a desired functionality, a
4 plurality of interoperable groups of elements capable of providing a plurality of functions, an
5 unrestricted manipulation of elements, and an unrestricted ownership of elements of at least one
6 aspect of the first protectable content.

1 11. The method of claim 1, further comprising:
2 analyzing the first protectable content to identify the first license.

1 12. The method of claim 1, further comprising:
2 storing the restriction values, use values, and interaction values assigned to the at least
3 some of the associated license attributes of the first license;
4 storing the corresponding attribute values associated with the second license;
5 based on the comparison of values, identifying values associated with the attributes
6 associated with the third protectable content, the third protectable content being associated with a
7 third license;
8 storing the identified values associated with the attributes of the third protectable content;
9 and
10 using the stored attribute values of at least one of the first license, second license, and
11 third license to determine attributes of a fourth protectable content, the fourth protectable content
12 being based on a combination including at least some aspects of at least one of the first
13 protectable content, second protectable content, and third protectable content.

1 13. The method of claim 1, further comprising:

2 storing the restriction values, use values, and interaction values assigned to the at least
3 some of the associated license attributes of the first license;
4 storing the corresponding attribute values associated with the second license;
5 based on the comparison of values, identifying values associated with the attributes
6 associated with the third protectable content, the third protectable content being associated with a
7 third license;
8 storing the identified values associated with the attributes of the third protectable content;
9 and
10 using the stored attribute values associated with the third protectable content to determine
11 attribute values of a fourth protectable content, the fourth protectable content being based on a
12 combination including at least some aspects of the third protectable content.

1 14. The method of claim 13, further comprising:

2 based on the attribute values of the fourth protectable content, determining a plurality of
3 license alternatives for the fourth protectable content.

1 15. The method of claim 14, further comprising:

2 selecting one of the plurality of license alternatives based on an operational environment
3 associated with the fourth protectable content.

1 16. The method of claim 14, further comprising:

2 storing the plurality of license alternatives in a network-accessible location.

1 17. The method of claim 1, further comprising:

2 providing a third license representative of the attributes associated with the third
3 protectable content.

- 1 18. The method of claim 1, further comprising:
2 based on the attributes associated with the third protectable content, determining a
3 plurality of license alternatives for the third protectable content.
- 1 19. The method of claim 18, further comprising:
2 selecting one of the plurality of license alternatives based on an operational environment
3 associated with the third protectable content.
- 1 20. The method of claim 18, further comprising:
2 storing the plurality of license alternatives in a network-accessible location.
- 1 21. The method of claim 1, wherein the at least one assigned use value is equivalent to a
2 default use value associated with the first license.
- 1 22. The method of claim 1, wherein the at least one assigned use value overrides a default
2 use value associated with the first license.
- 1 23. The method of claim 1, wherein the at least one assigned interaction value is equivalent
2 to a default interaction value associated with the first license.
- 1 24. The method of claim 1, wherein the at least one assigned interaction value overrides a
2 default interaction value associated with the first license.
- 1 25. The method of claim 1, wherein the assigned restriction, use, and interaction values of the
2 at least some of the associated license attributes of the first license override at least some of the
3 corresponding attribute values associated with the second license to form attribute values
4 associated with the third protectable content.

1 26. The method of claim 1, wherein the assigned restriction, use, and interaction values of the
2 at least some of the associated license attributes of the first license coexist along with at least
3 some of the corresponding attribute values associated with the second license as at least some
4 attribute values of the attributes associated with the third protectable content.

1 27. The method of claim 1, further comprising:
2 detecting event information associated with at least one of an error, a warning, and a
3 conflict generated during the comparison, the event information including indicia pertaining to at
4 least one of an event type, a frequency of occurrence of the event type, a related use value, a
5 related interaction value, and an identifier associated with at least one of the first license and
6 second license; and
7 storing the event information in a data structure.

1 28. The method of claim 1, further comprising assigning at least one source value to each of
2 the attributes associated with the third protectable content, the source values identifying attribute
3 information associated with at least one of the first and second licenses that affected values
4 associated with particular ones of the attributes of the third protectable content.

1 29. A data structure comprising:
2 a plurality of first license attributes associated with a first license, at least some of the
3 first license attributes including restriction, use, and interaction values, wherein restriction values
4 specify particular restrictions pertaining to a first protectable content, use values represent a
5 permissible degree of distribution of the first protectable content, and interaction values represent
6 a permissible degree of manipulation of the first protectable content;

7 a plurality of second license attributes associated with a second license, at least some of
8 the second license attributes including restriction, use, and interaction values, wherein restriction
9 values specify particular restrictions pertaining to a second protectable content, use values
10 represent a permissible degree of distribution of the second protectable content, and interaction
11 values represent a permissible degree of manipulation of the second protectable content; and

12 a plurality of aggregated license attributes associated with an aggregated license, at least
13 some of the aggregated license attributes being based upon a comparison of the restriction, use,
14 and interaction values associated with the first license with corresponding values associated with
15 the second license, wherein the aggregated license attributes affect at least one operation of an
16 aggregated content formed, at least in part, by a combination of at least some aspects of the first
17 and second protectable contents.

1 30. The data structure of claim 29, wherein the first protectable content and the second
2 protectable content correspond to different software elements.

1 31. The data structure of claim 30, wherein the software elements are compliant with an open
2 source definition.

1 32. The data structure of claim 30, wherein the first protectable content is compliant with an
2 open source definition and the second protectable content is not compliant with the open source
3 definition.

1 33. The data structure of claim 29, wherein the first protectable content corresponds to at
2 least one of a multimedia presentation, a video segment, an audio segment, a textual
3 representation, a work of art, a visual representation, a technological know-how, a business
4 know-how, and a contract right.

1 34. The data structure of claim 29, wherein the first license attributes associated with the first
2 license correspond to at least one of a software code format, a software naming convention, a
3 software code annotation, a warranty, a reverse-engineering activity, a patent litigation activity, a
4 standards body, a violation of intellectual property rights, and a textual description of at least one
5 aspect of the first license.

1 35. The data structure of claim 29, wherein the restriction values of the first license attributes
2 correspond to at least one of a prohibition, a requirement, and a nullity.

1 36. The data structure of claim 29, wherein the restriction values of the first license attributes
2 are set to at least one of true, false, required, don't care, forbidden, 1, 0, -1, and text.

1 37. The data structure of claim 29, wherein the use values of the first license attributes
2 correspond to at least one of an acquisition, a personal use, a research use, an organizational use,
3 a limited distribution, and an unlimited distribution of at least one aspect of the first protectable
4 content.

1 38. The data structure of claim 29, wherein the interaction values of the first license attributes
2 correspond to at least one of an original element, a modified element, a group of distinct
3 elements, a group of interconnected elements, a group of elements capable of providing a desired
4 functionality, a plurality of interoperable groups of elements capable of providing a plurality of
5 functions, an unrestricted manipulation of elements, and an unrestricted ownership of elements
6 of at least one aspect of the first protectable content.

1 39. The data structure of claim 29, wherein the first protectable content is identified based on
2 an analysis of the first license.

- 1 40. The data structure of claim 29, further comprising:
2 a plurality of license alternatives including license terms based on the restriction, use, and
3 interaction values of the first and second protectable contents.
- 1 41. The data structure of claim 40, wherein the license alternatives are stored in a network-
2 accessible location.
- 1 42. The data structure of claim 29, wherein at least some of the use values of the first license
2 attributes correspond to a default use value associated with the first license.
- 1 43. The data structure of claim 29, wherein at least one of the use values of the first license
2 attributes overrides a default use value associated with the first license.
- 1 44. The data structure of claim 29, wherein at least some of the interaction values of the first
2 license attributes correspond to a default interaction value associated with the first license.
- 1 45. The data structure of claim 29, wherein at least one of the interaction values of the first
2 license attributes overrides a default interaction value associated with the first license.
- 1 46. The data structure of claim 29, wherein at least some of the restriction, use, and
2 interaction values of the first license attributes override at least some of the restriction, use, and
3 interaction values of the second license attributes to form at least some of the aggregated license
4 attributes.
- 1 47. The data structure of claim 29, wherein at least some of the restriction, use, and
2 interaction values of the first license attributes coexist along with at least some of the restriction,

3 use, and interaction values of the second license attributes to form at least some of the
4 aggregated license attributes.

1 48. The data structure of claim 29, further comprising:

2 event information associated with at least one of an error, a warning, and a conflict
3 generated during the comparison, the event information including indicia pertaining to at least
4 one of an event type, a frequency of occurrence of the event type, a related use value, a related
5 interaction value, and an identifier associated with at least one of the first license and second
6 license.

1 49. The data structure of claim 29, further comprising:

2 a source value assigned to each of the aggregated license attributes, the source values
3 identifying attribute information associated with at least one of the first and second licenses that
4 affected values associated with particular aggregated license attributes.

1 50. A method comprising:

2 identifying a first plurality of license attributes associated with a first protectable
3 content;

4 identifying a second plurality of license attributes associated with a second protectable
5 content;

6 assigning a restriction value to each of the first plurality of license attributes specifying
7 particular restrictions pertaining to the first protectable content;

8 assigning a restriction value to each of the second plurality of license attributes
9 specifying particular restrictions pertaining to the second protectable content;

10 assigning at least one of a use value and an interaction value to at least some of the first
11 plurality of license attributes, the assigned use values of the first plurality of license attributes
12 representing a permissible degree of distribution of the first protectable content and the
13 interaction values of the first plurality of license attributes representing a permissible degree of
14 manipulation of the first protectable content;
15 assigning at least one of a use value and an interaction value to at least some of the
16 second plurality of license attributes, the assigned use values of the second plurality of license
17 attributes representing a permissible degree of distribution of the second protectable content and
18 the interaction values of the second plurality of license attributes representing a permissible
19 degree of manipulation of the second protectable content;
20 comparing at least some of the assigned restriction, use, and interaction values of the first
21 plurality of license attributes to corresponding assigned restriction, use, and interaction values of
22 the second plurality of license attributes; and
23 based, at least in part, on the comparison, determining a plurality of license alternatives
24 affecting an aggregated content, the aggregated content being based on a combination of at least
25 some aspects of the first and second protectable content.

1 51. The method of claim 50, wherein the first protectable content and the second protectable
2 content correspond to different software elements.

1 52. The method of claim 51, wherein the software elements are compliant with an open
2 source definition.

1 53. The method of claim 51, wherein the first protectable content is compliant with an open
2 source definition and the second protectable content is not compliant with the open source
3 definition.

1 54. The method of claim 50, wherein the first protectable content corresponds to at least one
2 of a multimedia presentation, a video segment, an audio segment, a textual representation, a
3 work of art, a visual representation, a technological know-how, a business know-how, and a
4 contract right.

1 55. The method of claim 50, wherein at least one of the first plurality of license attributes
2 corresponds to at least one of a software code format, a software naming convention, a software
3 code annotation, a warranty, a reverse-engineering activity, a patent litigation activity, a
4 standards body, a violation of intellectual property rights, and a textual description of at least one
5 aspect of the first protectable content.

1 56. The method of claim 50, wherein each of the restriction values assigned to the first and
2 second plurality of license attributes corresponds to one of a prohibition, a requirement, and a
3 nullity.

1 57. The method of claim 50, wherein at least one of the assigned use values of the first
2 plurality of license attributes corresponds to at least one of an acquisition, a personal use, a
3 research use, an organizational use, a limited distribution, and an unlimited distribution of at
4 least one aspect of the first protectable content.

1 58. The method of claim 50, wherein at least one of the assigned interaction values of the
2 first plurality of license attributes corresponds to at least one of an original element, a modified

3 element, a group of distinct elements, a group of interconnected elements, a group of elements
4 capable of providing a desired functionality, a plurality of interoperable groups of elements
5 capable of providing a plurality of functions, an unrestricted manipulation of elements, and an
6 unrestricted ownership of elements of at least one aspect of the first protectable content.

1 59. The method of claim 50, further comprising:
2 analyzing the first protectable content to identify the first plurality of license attributes.

1 60. The method of claim 50, wherein at least some of the use values assigned to at least some
2 of the first and second plurality of license attributes are equivalent to a default use value.

1 61. The method of claim 50, wherein at least one of the use values assigned to the first
2 plurality of license attributes overrides a default use value.

1 62. The method of claim 50, wherein at least some of the interaction values assigned to at
2 least some of the first and second plurality of license attributes are equivalent to a default
3 interaction value.

1 63. The method of claim 50, wherein at least one of the interaction values assigned to the
2 first plurality of license attributes overrides a default interaction value.

1 64. The method of claim 50, wherein the assigned restriction, use, and interaction values of
2 the first plurality of license attributes override at least some of the restriction, use, and interaction
3 values assigned to the second plurality of license attributes to form attribute values associated
4 with the aggregated content.

1 65. The method of claim 50, wherein at least some of the assigned restriction, use, and
2 interaction values of the first plurality of license attributes coexist along with at least some of the
3 restriction, use, and interaction values assigned to the second plurality of license attributes as at
4 least some attribute values associated with the aggregated content.

1 66. A method comprising:

2 receiving a request to identify a license of an aggregated content, the aggregated content
3 being based, at least in part, on a combination of a plurality of constituent protectable-content
4 elements;

5 identifying a plurality of licenses associated with a first one of the plurality of constituent
6 protectable-content elements;

7 identifying at least one license associated with each of the other constituent protectable-
8 content elements;

9 comparing license attribute values associated with each of the plurality of licenses of the
10 first constituent protectable-content element with corresponding license attribute values
11 associated with each of the other constituent protectable-content elements;

12 based, at least in part, on the comparison, identifying a plurality of license alternatives for
13 the aggregated content; and

14 selecting the requested license of the aggregated content from among the plurality of
15 license alternatives based, at least in part, on an operational environment of the aggregated
16 content.